

1997-98 SESSION
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

Committee Name:

Joint Committee on
Finance (JC-Fi)

Sample:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01a
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01b
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt02

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ **

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

➤ **

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH

➤ **

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ **

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ **

➤ Hearing Records ... HR

➤ **

➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ 97hrJC-Fi_Misc_pt132_LFB

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ **

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

Robert F. Taylor for MMAC

April 8, 1997

Honored Chairmen and members of the Joint Committee on Finance:

My name is Bob Taylor. I am President of Erie Manufacturing Company, a Milwaukee controls manufacturer with about 150 employees. With a strong personal interest in public education, I served on Wisconsin's Commission on schools for the 21st century, where I chaired the school finance committee, and I am here today on behalf of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, on whose Board of Directors and Education Committee I serve.

I am here to express MMAC's strong support for the proposal in the budget to strengthen charter school laws for Milwaukee. MMAC is pleased to be part of a wide ranging coalition in Milwaukee of parents, elected officials, educators and community leaders -- who have worked for these changes and support them with enthusiasm.

MMAC's interest in education is simple. As an organization of 2,500 companies with thousands of employees, we have a deep concern about the quality of our present and future work force. Our members tell us they face increasing difficulty hiring workers with basic skills. During the past decade, this has emerged as the most serious problem facing employers. If we do not resolve it, companies will be forced to expand or locate elsewhere to meet their needs.

Our members have the reasonable expectation that most of our workforce will continue to come from public schools. Demographics tell us that we are coming to a time when we will need all the young people currently in our schools to replace our aging workforce -- and we desperately hope that we can find a way to educate them. It's not happening now for the majority, who drop out before attaining a high school degree.

Robert F. Taylor
April 8, 1997
page 2

We support the Governor's proposal -- developed with the assistance and support of former MPS Superintendent Howard Fuller -- precisely because it will **improve** public schools by giving parents more options and teachers more freedom -- because it develop a class of charter schools that is more accountable for results than the public schools we have now, and because successful charter schools will provide a competitive benchmark against which conventional public schools can be measured. Our objective is not to obsolete public schools but rather to give them incentive to improve. We call it competition -- and we know it works.

Our support for public schools is not new. We provide about 30 percent of the scholarships awarded to MPS graduates. To be eligible, students must achieve a C+ average and maintain a 90 percent attendance rate. In return, they receive scholarships up to \$3,500 per year for four years of school. To help the students most in need, we have focused our efforts on the six worst performing schools in Milwaukee.

The experience has been rewarding but it has also been instructive as to why we cannot be satisfied with the status quo. Our latest scholarships were awarded to the class of 1996 from six schools. That class started with 2,784 freshmen. Four years later, only 821 graduated from those six schools, and of those, only 269 -- just under 10% of the entering freshmen class -- had the C+ average to make them eligible for our scholarships. Yet we operate a public education system that somehow says that's acceptable.

Our city - its students, its parents, its business community, its taxpayers, and, most of all , its youth - cannot continue to tolerate this kind of results. We business people know that improvement is a matter of our survival here. We ask for your support to give us that chance.

Thank you.



MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



MALCOLM X ACADEMY

North First Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212-2499
Area 414 264-0160

My name is Bonnie Jefferson and I am a parent and president of the Village Council, the governance body at Malcolm X Academy, a Milwaukee Public School. Our school is the only middle school with an Afrocentric focus.

Last school year in response to a decision by the Milwaukee School Board of Directors to close our school, we submitted an application to become a charter school. We applied for the charter, because no one was listening to us at the school board. We presented statistic after statistic, hard evidence about the improvements Malcolm X was experiencing because of the changes that had already been made. No one listened. The school board voted to close us down anyway. One school board member in particular, wanted to eliminate our academic program. This is the reason we sent our children to Malcolm X. We wanted an Afrocentric program for our children.

Charter school status would have given us the autonomy we needed to successfully educate our children. We could decide without going through all the politics and bureaucracy of the school board, who our teachers would be; the length of our school day, the length of our school year; Saturday classes; evening classes for adults; day care services for parents and teachers; adding a high school; and even budget priorities. The possibilities are endless. We could even



MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



hire our own special services, who could give us as much time as we see fit.

MALCOLM X ACADEMY
2760 North First Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212 2499
Area 414 264 0160

In order for a public school in Milwaukee to submit a charter school application, you need to have 51% of the teachers in building sign the application. Our teachers did that. But in the end, our teacher rescinded their application, because they were told if they became charter school teachers, they would lose their pension benefits. As parents we did not want that to happen.

In the new charter school proposal, Governor Thompson has fixed that problem. Experienced teachers are needed and they should not be punished for wanting to work with our kids.

With a stronger charter school law, if we were to become a charter school, no one could ever vote to close us down again, unless we were not leaving up to the standards we have established.

Please support a stronger charter school law.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Jefferson

President, Malcolm X Academy Village Council

Testimony of Bruce Thompson on Expanded Charter School Proposal
4/8/97

My name is Bruce Thompson. One week ago today I was elected on a reform platform to the Milwaukee School Board for the Fifth District, representing the East and near South sides of this city. In addition, I own the Downtown Montessori School and make my living as a professor at the Milwaukee School of Engineering.

I speak today for myself, not as a representative of any organization. But my testimony reflects my experience, especially during the last six months of campaigning and the thousands of conversations I have had with parents, teachers, and citizens in my district concerned about the state of our schools.

Our families need more and better options. Lacking sufficient satisfactory educational opportunities, families who can afford to are fleeing Milwaukee. This has a very negative effect on the economic viability of our neighborhoods and the quality of the education of the students who remain. It contributes to increasing economic, racial, and social segregation in our society.

MPS is subjected to powerful pressure groups that oppose any change in the status quo. It also suffers from a creaky bureaucracy, which too often resists responding to the needs of families.

Allowing greater use of charter schools will help see that the educational needs of my constituents are better served. Let me list three possible areas where they can help:

- I found a great desire on the East Side for a small school that would serve its community and help keep families in the city.
- Small focused schools can often serve the needs of children who would otherwise disrupt education in our large public schools.
- Charter schools, particularly on the South Side could relieve the terrible overcrowding in our elementary schools leading to better education for both the children in the charter schools and those remaining in the public schools.

Therefore I encourage you to strengthen Wisconsin's charter school law, by allowing additional sponsors and by clarifying that a charter school may be an instrumentality of MPS.

Thank you for your attention and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Bruce Thompson
332-6267

We are here to urge you to remove language regarding metallic mining licensing from the Governor's budget. This language removes licensing requirements instituted in the already-weakened SB 3.

This is not a budget item & can easily be removed. We are not asking for mining to be eliminated. We ask only that any mining company which wants to do business in our beautiful state prove they will act in an environmentally responsible manner. Let us not allow Wisconsin to be used as the testing ground for a yet unproven mining methods.

Thank you

Cathleen P. Rose
3481 N. Lake Dr
Milwaukee, WI 53211
961-8732

Wayne E. Schaeffer
4459 N. Frederick
Shorewood WI 53211
964-2309

Robin R. Hiller
138A S. Stevens
Rhineland, WI 53211
1-715-369-5362

I am a permanent resident of Rhineland, and my family has owned property in the area for generations.

For months we have been inundated with clever ads by the Crandon Mining Company. They say the mine will provide 400 jobs, thus boosting our local economy. So, we will build new homes and schools, and increase our fire and police protection. Yet, it is expected the mine will be in production for as little as 5 years. What will happen to our local economy then?

The Crandon Mining Company sates that this will be an environmentally safe mine, that it is the first mine of its type. Well, let them experiment elsewhere. Our beautiful northwoods IS our wealth. Not only do we value it above all else, tourism is very important to us, and anything which threatens our environment threatens us all, both economically and spiritually.

^{This language}
~~The Mining Moratorium Bill~~ is not anti-mining, it is pro environment. Let the owners of the Crandon Mining Company prove it can mine in an environmentally responsible manner before we allow them to mine in our home. I strongly urge you to ^{reinstate} ~~pass the Mining Moratorium~~

~~Bill, with~~ the language "a mine of similar geological type" ~~restored.~~ ^{into}

Thank you.

Robin R. Hiller
138 A S. Stevens
Rhineland, WI 54501

the requirements for
Metallic Mining
Licensing

**Statement on behalf of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee
and the Congregation Action Network**

**Hearing before the Joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature
April 8, 1997**

My name is Michael Howden. I am speaking on behalf of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee and the Congregation Action Network, a network of more than 100 churches and temples in southeastern Wisconsin whose members are vitally interested in matters of social justice.

We implore you, as members of the Committee with so much control over the State Budget, to make the following changes in the Budget as it relates to the Community Options Program and the W-2 Program.

The Community Options Program allows persons with disabilities of all ages their personal choice of remaining in their own homes in the community and of receiving needed care. Sadly, thousands of persons are forced into nursing homes each year because adequate funding is not available for home care. Studies have repeatedly shown that the Community Options Program is not only the first choice of most persons in need of care but is more economical to provide. Nevertheless the State of Wisconsin continues to fund Nursing home care far in excess of home care. Milwaukee County alone has waiting lists for home care exceeding 3000 persons. The proposed Budget proposes an increase of only several hundred persons while calling for an excessive cost increase for nursing home care. Please provide increases for the Community Options Program to cover the number of persons on the waiting lists.

While the proposed Budget includes some needed changes to the W-2, others are needed. We believe that these include the following:

- Please do adopt the Governor's proposal to raise the amount of W-2 grants but please guarantee that W-2 jobs pay the Minimum Wage and and pay it as a wage rather than a grant. W-2 participants have a right to be treated as any other worker.
- W-2 should guarantee the right to an appeals process that is fair and impartial. The current Fair Hearing Process has proven that a system needs to be in place so that families are not erroneously denied program benefits. Please include this requirement.
- Child Care provided as part of W-2 must meet current standards. There is ample evidence that care without standards or certification is not sufficient.
- If families are doing all that they are supposed to do and still cannot be self supporting, arbitrary time limits should not be enforced.
- Educational opportunities for long term family supporting employment success must be made available to W-2 participants.

Thank you for considering these matters.

H.O.S.E.A.
Hope Offered through Shared Ecumenical
Action
2660 S. 88th Street,
West Allis, WI, 53227

tel. 414-541-1822 / fax 414-541-1814

MY NAME IS ROBERT GERLACH. I AM A MEMBER OF ST. MARY CATHOLIC PARISH IN HALES CORNERS AND I REPRESENT THE HOUSING TASK FORCE OF H.O.S.E.A. H.O.S.E.A. IS A CHURCH-BASED COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN SOUTHERN MILWAUKEE COUNTY WITH A TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF OVER 27,000 PARISHONERS IN VARIOUS CHURCHES FROM CUDAHY TO HALES CORNERS.

H.O.S.E.A. IS IN THE MIDST OF A CAMPAIGN CALLED "I WANT TO STAY HERE!: A CAMPAIGN TO HELP SENIORS STAY IN THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES."

LAST YEAR WE TOOK A RANDOM SURVEY OF 400 OLDER ADULTS IN OUR CONGREGATIONS AND WHEN WE ASKED THEM WHETHER THEY PREFERRED TO STAY IN THEIR HOMES AS OPPOSED TO SOME OTHER ALTERNATIVE, 78% SAID THEY HAD NO PLANS TO MOVE. THEIR DESIRE WAS FOR AFFORDABLE HOME HEALTH CARE; SAFE, CONVENIENT AND AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION; RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE HELP WITH MAINTENANCE, REPAIRS AND OTHER CHORES IN THEIR HOMES. WE ALSO MET WITH OVER 200 OF OUR OLDER ADULT PARISHONERS IN FIVE CONGREGATIONAL FORUMS. AGAIN THEY SAID THEY PREFERRED TO STAY IN THIER HOMES.

ON OCTOBER 26, 1996 WE HELD A MEETING AT WILSON PARK SENIOR CENTER WITH OVER 300 PEOPLE--MAINLY SENIORS--TO KICK OFF OUR CAMPAIGN. WE SHARED OUR SURVEY RESULTS, STATED OUR CASE AND HAD OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FROM SENIORS, CITY AND COUNTY OFFICIALS, STATE REPRESENTATIVES, CONGRESSMAN KLECZKA AND AGENCIES THAT SERVE SENIORS.

JUST LAST MONTH AT AN ECUMENICAL PRAYER BREAKFAST IN CUDAHY AGAIN WE POSED THE QUESTION TO 200 PEOPLE, MOSTLY SENIORS. AND AGAIN, THEY PREFERRED TO STAY AT HOME RATHER THAN MOVE INTO NURSING HOMES. THEREFORE, I WISH TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO YOU THAT "WE WANT TO STAY IN OUR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES!"

SO AS YOU FINALIZE PLANS FOR THE RE-DESIGN OF LONG-TERM CARE, WE FEEL IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE COMMUNITY OPTIONS PROGRAM(C.O.P.) BASED ON THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE RATHER THAN POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GOVERNOR. IT IS MORE ECONOMICAL, MORE SENSIBLE AND MORE IN LINE WITH WHAT OUR SENIOR CITIZENS WANT AND NEED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Dennis Thornton, I am a Senior at UW-Milwaukee(UWM). During the fall semester of 1996, I had the privilege of taking three UW-Milwaukee distant learning courses at UW-Washington County.

Distant learning courses offered me a head-start at UWM. Distant learning courses provided me with a convenient commute (20 min, Compared to 1 hour). These benefits are even more important to part-time students, full-time employees. Many of them would not have the time to commute to Milwaukee.

In addition, many of the courses are taught by business people. People with *Real World* experience. The quality of education exceeded my expectations.

While the courses do offer some interaction, primarily audio, the next step would be to add two way video-conferencing. Video-Conferencing would give professors and student visual interaction that is currently lacking.

Therefore, I encourage you to consider the opportunities you can provide by continuing to support Distant learning programs.

Thank you for your time.

Dennis Thornton

Dennis Thornton

**WOMEN AND POVERTY
PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVE
3782 North 12th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53206
(414) 265-3925**

April 8, 1997

TO: Members of the Joint Finance Committee

FROM: Jean Verber and Loretta Williams, Coordinators
Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative

RE: - Recommendations for Budget Changes re: W-2
- Request for Special Meeting

Attached is a copy of the Recommendations for Repairing W-2 prepared by the Milwaukee Save Our Children Coalition. We have been active members of this Coalition for over two years and have invested much time, energy, discussion, and getting input from Pay for Performance participants * as part of the process of formulating these recommendations.

We urge you to give serious consideration to these important items which address only the most outstanding flaws needing change before W-2 is implemented this summer. We look to you as our representatives and leaders of the thousands of families struggling to make a successful transition to W-2.

We have a further request. Since most, if not all, families that will be affected by the W-2 policy and "engaged" in Pay for Performance requirements during this hearing time today, we ask that a Saturday morning in April be designated so the impacted community can have the opportunity to directly and personally speak to their concerns before this Joint Finance Committee.

May we suggest that several members of the Committee come to Milwaukee April 12 or April 19 or April 26 for a two-hour listening session from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. We will be responsible for arranging a place and getting the word out about the hearing.

We will be in contact with you in a day or two to confirm a date for this special meeting.

We thank you for giving this part of the Budget your priority consideration.

* If you have not already received a copy of our report "In Our Own Words: A Mother's Perspective on Welfare Reform", please let us know and we will see that one is mailed to you.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO REPAIR W - 2

from

Milwaukee Coalition to Save Our Children

The children of Wisconsin who face precarious life challenges may be put at greater risk as the state implements welfare changes. In the first months of 1997, during the new session of the Legislature, we have an opportunity to correct many of the major defects in Wisconsin Works (W-2), so that Wisconsin children are not put further into peril and deeper poverty.

Many of the pending W-2 reforms violate basic moral standards of a society that heretofore has recognized its responsibility for the nurturing and development of children. While we believe that W-2 requires numerous corrections, we have focused on those items that deserve the most immediate attention. They are:

1. To ensure family-supporting incomes, all work assignments should pay at least the minimum wage and be eligible for the earned income tax credit.

The thousands of families in W-2 work assignments deserve to be treated like all workers, with protection under minimum wage and hour standards, freedom from workplace injury, illness or harassment, and eligibility for earned income tax credits. To do less would be to assign these workers to second class status, to put them in a position of undermining the wage and hour standards of other workers and to further decrease the ability of these families to provide for their children. Our coalition supports the concept of providing wages comparable to workers in similar jobs, so that families can begin the process of escaping poverty.

Also, W-2's stated goals call for supporting "individual efforts to achieve self-sufficiency," yet, it denies access to the Earned Income Tax Credit to those assigned to community service jobs or the W-2 transitions jobs where the payment is made in the form of grant, and not a pay check. Since the EITC is available only to those who work, it is short-sighted to deny this extra income to working families at the lowest rung of the economic ladder, and also to deny the influx of some \$92.6 million in these federal funds into the state.

2. Guarantee appeal rights and fairness of treatment for all.

Persons seeking assistance from W-2 programs should not forfeit their rights. The right to "due process" is a basic right of all citizens guaranteed by the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The implementation of the Pay for Performance program since March 1, 1996 has clearly demonstrated the need for continuing the present "fair hearing" process to correct mistakes that are inevitable in such major programs. The recently passed federal welfare reform program calls for each state to explain how the state will provide for appeals. If Wisconsin is to stand as a model of innovation, W-2 should maintain the current fair hearing process, including the continuation of benefits during the appeal process and the right to a hearing before an impartial judge.

3. Families who "play by the rules" should be guaranteed assistance.

Families should not be penalized due to circumstances over which they have no control. to be denied assistance if the parent has been unable to find a job within required time limits or because the program has run out of money is grossly unfair. Families are required to hold up their side of the social contract and the state should be required to do the same.

4. To prepare parents to have access to family-supporting jobs, training and educational opportunities need to be available.

There is no meaningful provision in W-2 for training and education so the burden falls to employers to prepare participants to gain skills and background necessary for the workplace. If Wisconsin is serious about moving families into decent-paying jobs, then real training and educational opportunities must be funded and available.

5. The need for ready access to quality child care is a must.

The reform of AFDC offers an opportunity to enrich our children at an early age to prepare them for learning once they reach school age. There is no better investment in the future of our community than to assure quality child care for all children. Such care must be of a quality that meets current standards of safety, nutrition and development. We therefore support the goals of the Early Childhood Reinvestment Act and call for funding that will make quality child care available to all low-income families. The co-payment schedule must recognize the family's ability to pay, without sacrificing quality of care.

OTHER ISSUES

We also recognize other issues that are critical to the success of families, and will support efforts of other organizations that address these concerns. The other issues include:

1. To make it possible for parents who do not live with their children to be eligible for W-2 employment positions. It only makes sense that these non-custodial parents be made eligible for W-2 participation, in order to encourage both parents to be involved in the lives of their children, to assist in reuniting families and to provide greater financial stability for these families.
2. To raise a parent's mandatory W-2 work requirement from when the youngest child reaches 12 weeks of age to one year. This is critical for several reasons: first, the cost of providing quality child care for this group is expensive; secondly, it is difficult to find sufficient child care for children under age one.
3. To "Grandfather" current AFDC recipients to their current levels of payment, covering those in the W-2 transitions category.
4. To maintain Medicaid (T19Medical Assistance) as an entitlement for low-income families.
5. To ensure access to affordable mass transit to connect residents to jobs. funding priorities should give ample consideration to transportation options that meet the needs of Central City residents.

I am Gene Duncan from Wauwatosa, Milwaukee County. I Co-chair the Legislative Committee of Alliance for the Mentally Ill Wisconsin, a non-profit organization for people who have mentally illness, their families and friends. For 18 years, my 40 year old daughter has had a serious mental illness. After experiences with my daughter and volunteer activities with the Alliance for the Mentally Ill, I am very aware of the terrible suffering and special problems of people with disabling brain disorders.

We strongly oppose the inclusion of LRB 2207/2 Modify right to refuse treatment in the Governor's Budget Bill. We believe it includes provisions that are a matter of major public policy which should be reviewed and debated separately from the budget process.

Among the proposed changes is the **creation of non-treatment units or facilities which do not currently exist**. Persons found competent to refuse treatment could be housed in the non-treatment facilities. Facilities would be created by the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS), a county or another person operating an inpatient facility. DHFS rules would be followed and they could not be located in a prison or a jail. However, patients in non-treatment facilities would not be entitled to conditions or facilities that are substantially similar to those who accept treatment. They could be locked in their room for certain periods. Patients could be held there until they decided to consent to treatment or until the end of their commitment.

This could result in placement of patients in a punitive environment for a significant length of time. We believe better information needs to be gathered about the nature of the problem of persons who are committed but competent and refusing treatment. What is the diagnosis? What treatment is being offered? Is there a treatment they would accept? How many persons are there? Where do the problems exist? Significant changes in the law should not be considered until there is a clear definition of the problem and issues. The budget bill is not the context for such an analysis and review of options.

We ask you to remove LRB 2207/2 Modify Right to Refuse Treatment from the Budget Bill.



AFSCME®

American Federation of State County Municipal Employees

MILWAUKEE DISTRICT COUNCIL 48

3427 West St. Paul Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208
Telephone: (414) 344-6868
Fax: (414) 344-1274

FRED BAU
Associate Director
MARTHA LOVE
President

TO: Members of the Joint Finance Committee

FROM: Milwaukee District Council 48 Executive Board

We appreciate the opportunity to communicate our concerns about transportation funding to members of the Joint Finance Committee. Our union represents many municipal street and county highway workers throughout Wisconsin. We see increasing needs for additional funding assistance to local government to fund these infrastructure programs.

Local government faces a situation where the highway costs of the future could increasingly shift over to the property tax. This could displace funding for other important public sector programs and anger local taxpayers who would unfairly bear the burdens of road programs.

We believe that Wisconsin's road network is a statewide economic development and jobs network that is a statewide responsibility. Manufacturing, services, tourism, agriculture and forestry all depend on a healthy road network. Investing in this network is a prudent economic development decision.

We are not in a position to call for specific solutions to Wisconsin's transportation problems, but we do feel comfortable in asking you to support higher levels of local transportation aids and in asking you to keep an open mind on revenue options that could fund these needs.

in the public service



AFSCME®

American Federation of State County Municipal Employees

MILWAUKEE DISTRICT COUNCIL 48
3427 West St. Paul Avenue
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Telephone: (414) 344-6868
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FRED BAU
Associate Director
MARTHA LOVE
President

TO: Members of the Joint Finance Committee

FROM: Milwaukee District Council 48 Executive Board

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our concerns about a very critical issue to the citizens and employees of Milwaukee County.

The protection of the most vulnerable amongst us has been the responsibility of government and the civil service employees who work for the citizens of our communities. While the provision of many services has been contracted out to caring and capable private sector providers, the determination of who is entitled to receive these services has always been made by public employees. This has ensured that the vulnerable among us receive the services they need to support and protect themselves and their families.

The state of Wisconsin is attempting to walk away from this important commitment by requesting that the federal government allow the state to privatize eligibility determination for food stamps and medical assistance. The state wants to abandon this commitment not only for participants in the W-2 program but for the elderly and disabled as well.

We urge this committee to revisit the language passed in last year's W-2 bill which allowed this important decision to be made by private providers for W-2 participants. We encourage you to delete from the Governor's budget the language which would allow private for profit companies to decide who among our elderly and disabled population will receive food stamps and medical assistance.

These populations deserve to be protected by a workforce who are accountable to their constituents and elected officials. The CEO of a private company is not accountable to the constituents of this state but to his shareholders. The CEO is legally committed to protect the bottom line not those whose poverty, age or disability is forcing them to live at the bottom of the barrel.

There are many ways we can improve upon the current systems that serve the needy and vulnerable. We want to work with our local and state policy makers to improve these systems. Private providers have an important role in the system, but it must always be within the public structure that provides the greatest protection for those who are least able to protect themselves. That is our job and your job too. We urge you to keep the eligibility determination for food stamps and medical assistance in a system which protects recipients and provides public accountability.



Good morning, my name is Marty Franzkowiak. I am the President elect of the Wisconsin Propane Gas Association. I reside in Saukville and work at a family propane business located on the North side of Milwaukee. I am appearing today in opposition to the Propane Meter Licensing provisions included in Senate Bill 77 and Assembly Bill 100.

The propane meter licensing proposal came directly from the Bureau of Weights and Measures within the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection and is designed primarily to raise an additional \$20,000 for the Bureau. At a recent meeting, the board of directors of the Wisconsin Propane Gas Association indicated strong opposition to the proposed meter licensing fee. Many of our board members view it as an additional tax which will have to be passed on to propane users.

However, we do share the Department's concern for accurate measurement of propane and would be happy to supply to the Department the results of annual meter tests conducted by private testing firms, as required under provisions of SB77 and AB100. We believe that this increased reliance on private testing should lead to a decreased reliance on Department testing, and should translate into cost savings of at least \$20,000.

I appreciate this opportunity to share our thoughts with you and would be happy to entertain any questions you may have.

Milwaukee Area Technical College

Testimony Before the Joint Finance Committee

April 8, 1997

**United Community Center Gymnasium
1028 South Ninth Street
Milwaukee, WI 53204**

Testifying for MATC:

Joseph A. Rice
Vice Chair, MATC District Board
Chair, Legislative Committee,
Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association

Lauren Baker
Member, MATC District Board

Dr. John R. Birkholz
President, MATC

Joint Finance Committee Remarks
Joseph A. Rice

MATC is in a unique position to help launch the Governor's vision of Wisconsin as a leader in technology. To do so, we need the support of the Joint Finance Committee for the WTCS's proposed 2.5 percent annual increase in General State Aid.

Without putting further pressure on local property tax, MATC would be able to continue to maintain and build on a variety of innovative educational components.

We have a number of success stories:

(see attached)

Building a Technical College for the Future

Joseph A. Rice

Page 2

MATC's service area benefits greatly from our ability to create programs and innovations which will serve well into the future.

Examples:

- * The Health Sciences Technology center opened in 1996 as an innovative learning center designed to meet the growing demand for technically skilled health care workers in the Milwaukee area.
- * Milwaukee's public television stations -- owned and operated by MATC -- have taken a leadership role in developing digital television. This new technology will improve reception and more importantly allow for integration with computers and other communication devices.....truly the wave of the future.

Partnerships With Businesses

Joseph A. Rice

Page 3

Keeping pace with the growing demands of the business community has required MATC to keep pace with a number of innovative initiatives.

Examples:

- * We have developed more than 30 Workplace Learning Centers where a company's employees can be trained in basic skills and advanced technology.
- * MATC has teamed up with the Private Industry Council to provide employment for area residents affected by W-2.
- * MATC operates two Milwaukee Enterprise Centers -- North and South -- to help new businesses get off the ground so they can employ area residents.
- * MATC is proud to be part of a partnership with the private sector, state, and local government in the Riverworks Manufacturing Technology Center designed to upgrade the manufacturing capabilities of local metalworking companies.

Joint Finance Committee Remarks
Lauren Baker

We are here today seeking your support of a 2.5 percent annual increase in General state Aid for a variety of reasons. MATC continues to be sought out as a resource for providing skilled, educated workers. MATC is an integral part of providing educational opportunities to the disadvantage who want to leave the ranks of welfare recipients. MATC's history and mission are at the very heart of the Governor's own vision of making Wisconsin a world leader in technology.

We ask you to consider the proposed 2.5 percent annual increase on the basis of what MATC has done and can continue to do. I have a few examples of MATC's accomplishments:

(see attached)

School-To-Work Initiatives

Lauren Baker

Page 2

MATC is committed to strengthening the notion that our students will continue to be gainfully employed once they complete their educational experience with an associate degree or certificate. We want to do more in the area of school-to-work initiatives.

Examples:

- * Our 1996 employment survey showed that 93 percent of MATC graduates were employed within six months of graduation. In addition, grads' estimated total gross annual earnings of \$34.9 million go back into the area's economy.
- * We support a reform movement which would allow W-2 recipients to continue to attend school so that they have an opportunity to become productive members of society.
- * Our innovative program, "Get Started," is providing W-2 recipients who are young parents with children under one year of age with the soft skills training needed to get jobs.

Professional Development of Faculty and Staff

Lauren Baker

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In order for MATC to continue to be a viable community resource, we need to continue to offer an ongoing opportunity to our faculty and staff as a means of maintaining our high caliber of professionals as well as attracting other highly qualified professionals.

Examples:

- * Our Professional Development Division provides computer training and a wide array of ongoing certification and development programs in such areas as curriculum writing, team building, and diversity training.
- * Our Educational Research and Dissemination program, which has been developed by the faculty to support instructors in meeting student needs, offers more than 70 courses and seminars.
- * In the past year alone, faculty and staff have invested more than 2,500 hours in learning new computer desktop operations.

Joint Finance Committee Remarks
Dr. John R. Birkholz

As part of the Wisconsin Technical College System, MATC is requesting that the Joint Finance Committee support an increase in General State Aid from the 1 percent per year proposed by the Governor to 2.5 percent annually. While we are grateful that the Governor has proposed the 1 percent increase, it is simply too low an increase coming on the heels of no increases over the past three years.

This is a problem for MATC in that, like other technical colleges, we are faced with increasing pressures to provide support to businesses who are demanding technically skilled workers. At the same time, we are attempting to address the W-2 issues of getting individuals off welfare and into the workforce on a permanent basis.

A 2.5 percent annual increase would be a step in the right direction. MATC would be able to build on our successes and we have a number of examples:

(see attached)

Alternative Delivery of Education
Dr. John R. Birkholz
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MATC will continue to create new ways to expand on our innovative current methods in giving our service areas enhanced access to all of our educational offerings.

Examples:

- * Night and weekend classes
- * At home via television or on the internet
- * Interactive television at home or in the classroom
- * Two-way audio
- * The versatility of a four-campus college

Maintaining and Expanding Computer Capabilities
Dr. John R. Birkholz
Page 3

MATC relies on excellence in computerization to drive our excellence in technological training.

Examples:

- * A new eight-processor mainframe
- * More than 4,500 new PCs, 3,000 for student use
- * A new fiber-optic cabling system
- * A fully integrated software system called COSMO, which greatly enhances our capabilities in processing data for Student Services, the Financial and Business Offices, and Human Resources
- * Enhanced internet access and link to our Library
- * Interactive electronic kiosks to enhance information for students

matc

Milwaukee Area Technical College



Yes, We're in the Business of
Education *but...*

Providing Direction

matc

Milwaukee Area Technical College

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MEQUON CARE CENTER

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April 8, 1997

Members of the Legislative Joint Finance Committee

My name is Richard J. Rau and I am Executive Director of Mequon Care Center, a 213 bed not for profit nursing facility located in Mequon, Wisconsin.

I am commenting on the Governor's Biennial Budget Bill (Assembly Bill 100/Senate Bill 77).

Much has been stated about the perception of the Budget Bill's treatment of Nursing Home reimbursement in regards to the rate increases of other providers but this masks the actual rate increase which will be passed on to a provider because of changes that are embodied in the bill and in the formula that is expected to implement the bill when passed.

It is important to note that individual facility's do not receive increases based on the appropriation but rather as a result of the formula that implements the appropriation.

Some of the problems associated with the budget bill as we envision it being implemented are:

- The decrease in the direct care target from 110% to 102% (or whatever % it would be set) will have the effect of lowering the base of the current program reimbursement which flies in the face of the realities of increasing acuity levels as well as regulatory oversight and increasing resident and family expectation.
- Reducing the Capital Cost Share from 40% to 20% means that for the second year in a row the amount of money paid will be reduced and since facility's have little or no way to compensate for this reduction, it will have to mean that money will be redirected from the provision of services. This is an unfortunate reality since the bonds and mortgages need to be paid in order for the facility to continue to operate.
- The reclassification of all Medicare days to the Intensive Skilled Nursing category will have the effect of reducing the base on which the current formula has expended money for the provision of care. It is a change that is arbitrary and blatantly unfair and illogical. I would ask that if this change is kept in the bill, that the department, based on the same premise, then be instructed to classify all similar Medicaid residents at the same level of care for reimbursement purposes. All I am saying is that there should be consistency (within the Medicaid Program) with the classification of the level of care of a resident that is not based on the payor source but rather the care needs of the resident.


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It also needs to be reinforced that a lowering of the Budget Bill appropriation could place Wisconsin out of compliance with the Boren Amendment, a federal requirement that economically and efficiently operated nursing facilities be paid reasonable rates.

Additionally, while we all support COP funding for appropriate clients, it needs to be emphasized that nursing homes residents are significantly different. This was pointed out in the October 1996 DHFS paper Profile of Long Term Care Clients. According to that report **"as a group, nursing home residents tend to show more adverse conditions, functionally or mentally, than their community waiver counterparts."** Nursing home care and COP are excellent complementary programs. However, they are not necessarily similar in the people they serve and the services they provide and, therefore, a comparison of funding levels is an apples and oranges exercise.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments as you work on this very important piece of legislation that will have dramatic effects on all of us as Wisconsin citizens over the coming years. If at any time in the process of your work, you feel that I might be able to answer any questions or provide insight into the probable consequences of any facet of this legislation, feel free to call upon me.

Respectfully submitted.


Richard J. Rau MS, NHA
Executive Director



AFSCME®

American Federation of State County Municipal Employees

MILWAUKEE DISTRICT COUNCIL 48

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FRED BAU
Associate Director
MARTHA LOVE
President

April 8, 1997

TO: Members of the Joint Finance Committee

FROM: AFSCME District Council 48 Legislative Committee
Dave Braam, Denal Crawford, Carol Wronski, Tri-Chairs

RE: Transportation Funding

We appreciate the opportunity to express our concerns about transportation funding to the members of the Joint Finance Committee.

This past February, Governor Thompson introduced his Executive Budget Bill. We would like to go on record with some of our concerns in the area of transportation aids.

We know that since 1980, funding for local transportation has not kept up with the rate of inflation or local development needs. We know that state aid payments for local transportation costs have fallen gradually since 1989 as local costs outpaced both aid appropriations and inflation.

The Governor did not propose any major transportation revenue increase in his budget, but has indicated to the Legislature that he would accept any increases they would propose.

As AFSCME members, we would like to let the Joint Finance Committee know that we hope you will keep an open mind on revenue options that could fund these needs. This would allow us to continue to enjoy and also provide the level of services and quality of life we all enjoy as citizens of this great state.

in the public service



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FRED BAU
Associate Director
MARTHA LOVE
President

April 8, 1997

TO: Members of the Joint Finance committee

FROM: AFSCME District Council 48 Legislative Committee
Dave Braam, Denal Crawford, Carol Wronski - Tri-Chairs

RE: Food Stamp and MA Eligibility Determination

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our concerns about a very critical issue to the citizens and employees of Milwaukee County.

The protection of the most vulnerable amongst us has been the responsibility of government and the civil service employees who work for the citizens of our communities. While the provision of many services has been contracted out to caring and capable private sector providers, the determination of who is entitled to receive these services has always been made by public employees. This has ensured that the vulnerable among us receive the services they need to support and protect themselves and their families.

The state of Wisconsin is attempting to walk away from this important commitment by requesting that the federal government allow the state to privatize eligibility determination for food stamps and medical assistance. The state wants to abandon this commitment not only for participants in the W-2 program but for the elderly and disabled as well.

We urge this committee to revisit the language passed in last year's W-2 bill which allowed this important decision to be made by private providers for W-2 participants. We encourage you to delete from Governor's budget the language which would allow private for profit companies to decide who among our elderly and disabled population will receive food stamps and medical assistance.

These populations deserve to be protected by a workforce who are accountable to their constituents and elected officials. The CEO of a private company is not accountable to the constituents of this state but to his shareholders. The CEO is legally committed to protect the bottom line not those whose poverty, age or disability is forcing them to live at the bottom of the barrel.

There are many ways we can improve upon the current systems that serve the needy and vulnerable. We want to work with our local and state policy makers to improve these systems. Private providers have an important role in the system, but it must always be within the public structure that provide the greatest protection for those who are least able to protect themselves. That is our job and your job too. We urge to keep the eligibility determination for food stamps and medical assistance in a system which protects recipients and provides public accountability.

in the public service